

Communicating a Helpful Message

Six words. Sometimes, they are all we need to hear. They can be uttered verbally or they can be communicated by a hug, a note, a pat on the back, or by an action taken to alleviate the stress or burden. In fact, it is my opinion that our need of this message in its verbal and nonverbal forms may be a 50/50 split—sometimes we need to hear it and sometimes we just need to experience it without the words being said. The message is: *“I hear you, and I care.”*

Life can be very stressful and there are times we all come to a point where we feel overwhelmed. It is during those times that we need someone to come and help us with the overflow. The interesting thing is that we give off signals and others pick them up. Most of those who know us well, know when we are happy, sad, annoyed, frustrated, angry, etc. They even adjust their approaches to us as they interpret the signals we send out. It should not be too difficult to go a step further and, when we get the message of distress, send back, in some manner, *“I hear you, and I care.”*

There are few things in life more frustrating than going to someone you believe can help and then being turned away. It may be a problem at work...It may be a relationship problem...It may be a dread of the unknown...It may just a “down” time of our life. Whatever it is, if we send a friend a signal and they refuse to help us, we can become even more discouraged.

Imagine the thoughts of the woman who approached Jesus in the incident recorded in Mark 5:25-34. She, according to Mark, *“had endured much at the hands of many physicians and had spent all she had and was not helped at all, but rather had grown worse...”* This woman needed to hear the message, *“I hear you, and I care.”* Even though she was healed when she touched his robe, Jesus took the time to stop and talk to her—in the midst of his own stressful moment. (Jairus’ daughter was dying and he was on his way to Jairus’ house.) His compassion for the woman is evident even above the miraculous healing that took place on that day.

Chances are, there is someone you know right now who is sending out signals that tell you he or she is needing to hear, *“I hear you and I care.”* Please take the time to convey the message and then follow up. You may not be able to help in a significant way, but “just listening” may be the thing most needed. It may make a world of difference.

“A friend loves at all times, and a brother is born for adversity”
(Proverbs 17:17). —Lance Cordle